GOVERNANCE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND MOBILITY IN GHANA

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AU   African Union

CPP   Convention People's Party

DA   District Assemblies

DACF   District Assemblies Common Fund

DCE   District Chief Executive

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

ERP   Economic Recovery Programme

FSS   Forum for Social Studies

GCM   Governing Climate Mobility

GIS   Ghana Immigration Service

GPRS   Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy

GSGDA   Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda

GSS   Ghana Statistical Services

NADMO   National Disaster Management Organisation

NDC   National Democratic Party

NPP   National Patriotic Party

PNDC   Provisional National Defence Council

RCC   Regional Coordinating Council

SAP   Structural Adjustment Programmes

PREFACE

The research programme Governing Climate Mobility (GCM) is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and is a partnership between three institutions: the Forum for Social Studies (FSS) in Ethiopia, the Centre for Migration Studies at the University of Ghana and the Danish Institute for International Studies. GCM considers the links between (1) mobility decisions and practices, (2) environmental and climate-change impacts, and (3) governance contexts and interventions. It looks specifically at the role of governance contexts and interventions as mediating between climate change and mobility in Ghana in comparison to Ethiopia. This working paper is intended as a background study to inform the programme's data collection and outline the contexts within which mobility factors, governance interventions and climate-related changes interact and are played out.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, climate change and mobility dynamics have increasingly been at the forefront of global transformations, shaping processes of change in different spheres of society and prompting reactions in local households as in global political arenas (Boas, 2015). For this reason, climate change and mobility dynamics have become topical issues in both academic and policy circles (see for instance Raleigh et al., 2008; Zickgraf, 2019). In recent years, climate change and mobility have even been approached as interlinked factors in broad and often politicised discussions of supposedly increasing climate migration. However, it is problematic to make any simple correlation between slow-onset climate change and migration, as people's decisions whether to move or not are often highly complex (Boas et al., 2019; Perch-Nielsen et al., 2008). For this reason, the notion of climate-related mobility can explore the influence on mobility of different layers of individuals' or households' practices, perceptions, capabilities and aspirations, some of which may be related to climate change without being exclusively shaped by it.

Whereas the relationship between climate adaptation and mobility practices has been examined before (Zickgraf, 2019; Jarawura & Smith, 2015), the influence of governance as a significant factor prompting climate-related mobility has often been overlooked. This provides an opportunity to investigate the possible links between mobility practices, climate change adaptation and the way governance contexts and interventions may play into such relationships. This shortcoming is what the GCM programme seeks to address. Thus, the present working paper constitutes one of two longitudinal studies inquiring into how the interrelated dynamics linking environmental change, governance and mobility shape the way a society is formed. The present study has Ghana as its focus, while its companion study examines the case of Ethiopia.

As already indicated above, it would be premature to assume that climate change drives certain mobility practices in any direct relationship, or for that matter that a certain governance practice drives a particular mobility response. Instead, this paper seeks to explore the possible interplays and points of influence between climate change adaptation, mobility and governance dynamics from a historical perspective, drawing out examples of interconnections that could inspire further investigation. As climate change is a recently defined notion, we explore this leg of the study by looking at historical examples of adaptation to environmental change or stress.

Overall, the purpose of this working paper is to establish a contextual outline that can guide and strengthen further studies in the GCM programme. As such, it examines the historical dynamics and links between the three components of governance, mobility and environmental change in Ghana. Doing so, the history of governance provides the foundational layer for the working paper's structure against which mobility and adaptation are explored throughout distinct periods of Ghana's history. We do not intend to provide a full and complete overview of that history but rather will draw out certain examples that speak specifically to the links between the three components. For instance, we use the north-south divide to exemplify the diverse and at times even opposed dynamics in the country, notwithstanding the many other divides and dichotomies that also exist. The working paper's inquiries are guided by two overall questions:

- *What are the most significant changes in Ghana's history relating to governance structures, environmental dynamics and mobility practices?*

- *And which cases and spheres have commonalities that intersect and interact in the three fields?*

The paper is divided into four parts, starting with a section on significant historical episodes of political authority that are relevant to the formation of present-day governance structures. This section feeds into the next with historical changes in environmental dynamics and shows how people have responded to changes in their environment. The third section builds on issues of governance and environmental dynamics, adding reflections on different considerations to forms of mobility that have previously affected Ghanaian livelihoods or are continuing to do so. The paper ends with a final discussion of how intersections between the three legs can be approached and what is worth more attention in future studies.

Figure 1. Ghana in the west African region (adapted from Google Earth 2020)

POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND GOVERNANCE

Ghana has been subject to various systems of governance both nationally and sub-nationally. This history of governance has also been linked to different environmental dynamics and forms of mobility, some more dominant than others at different points in time. Following Mark Bevir, we understand governance as 'the complex processes and interactions that constitute patterns of rule (…) with recognition of the diverse activities that often blur the boundary of state and society. Governance (…) highlights phenomena that are hybrid and multijurisdictional with plural stakeholders who come together in networks' (Bevir, 2010: 2). The blurring of boundaries cuts across the local, regional, national and international contexts. As central elements of governance dynamics, accountability and authority have been practised in various forms and with different objectives, all leaving an imprint in the dynamics between governing bodies and society as experienced today. Examples include the societal dynamics that transpired from the enforced extraction of human resources in the form of slaves from the north of the country during colonialism. Looking at the decentralised and fragmented power structures found today, moreover, the continued presence and prominence of forms of traditional leadership carries the imprint of how concepts of sovereignty, authority and legitimacy have developed and shaped households' practices and the relationship between citizens and governing institutions (Ray, 2003). Of equal importance is the wide variety of governance systems that affect this relationship, from colonial dominance and organisation to the period of independence and the subsequent coups and periods of authoritarian rule.

This section is structured into four parts, the first three dealing with the most distinctive historical periods in respect of the forms of political authority and showing how Ghana has been engaged in global dynamics, for instance, through colonisation or as a driving force for ECOWAS collaboration. Here it becomes evident how key types of governance have been practised and how links with the

central aspects of mobility and environmental circumstances have changed. The fourth part looks at contemporary Ghana, the political authority that is present, state-society relations and the characteristics of the sub-national governance in the country.

Autonomous kingdoms and military collaboration: pre-colonial Ghana

Prior to the arrival of the first Europeans (i.e. the Portuguese) in 1471, what constitutes present-day Ghana was divided into several kingdoms and territories governed by traditional rulers. Traditional rulers were still governing the various kingdoms when the Dutch, English, Danes and Swedes arrived. The Europeans called the country the 'Gold Coast' because of the presence of large deposits of gold, which became the main trading commodity (Getz 2004). Each kingdom functioned as an autonomous state, although the stronger states grew at the expense of weaker ones. According to Ray:

> 'These pre-colonial states experienced growth, ascendancy, hegemony, decline, and incorporation into other states in rather similar ways to that experienced by the European states. These pre-colonial states had their own structures and processes for exercising authority and carrying out various functions, including that of local government.' (Ray, 2003: 87)

The Asante kingdom and several Fante states along the coast (see Figure 2) had particularly extensive regional influences. Their governance systems were built around revenue generation from rich natural resources, including gold and timber. With their extensive hierarchically structured societies and elaborate military forces, they clashed with the British colonisers several times, the Asante kingdom often being undefeated, and they were ultimately able to resist colonisation until 1874. By then, these kingdoms had become more powerful than those of the rulers further north because the forested, almost impenetrable area stood between the seafaring colonisers and the northern territories from which most slaves were taken (Goody, 2018 [1975]). Consequently, the southern groups became gatekeepers, a position they could use as leverage in negotiating their subsequent relationships with the European powers and later colonial rule.
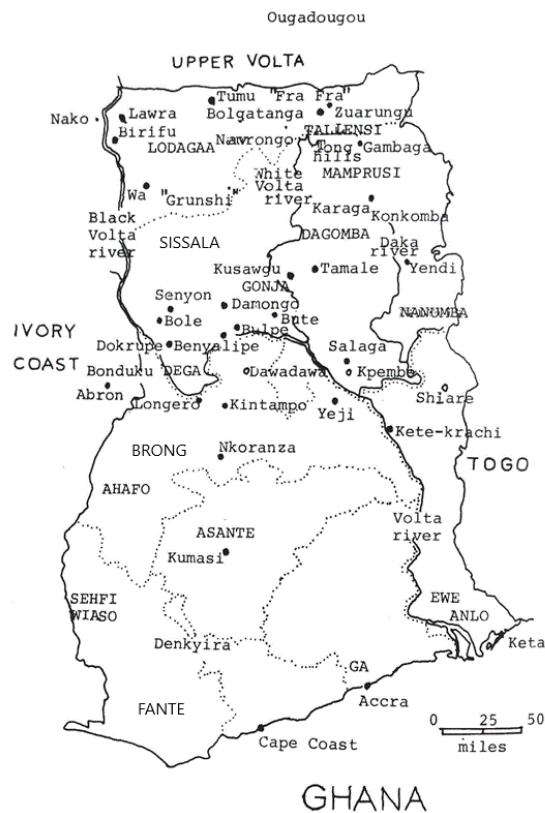
Figure 2. Map of Ghana showing places and peoples with ethnic units in capitals. Although, the groups are simplified and smaller ethnic units are omitted, the figure illustrates the relative sizes of the various smaller and more fragmented units or groups in the north compared to the larger kingdoms in the south that tended to control larger areas (adapted from Goody, 2018 [1975])

By contrast, the northern states (as shown on Figure 2) were much smaller and engaged particularly in agriculture and trade, as well as being organised far less hierarchically. To exemplify the characteristics of and differences among these northern groups, in Box 1 we focus on the Sissala and Dagaab.

Box 1. Two northern ethnic groups

In the northern regions, the Dagaab kingdoms stretched across the north-westernmost corner of present-day Ghana for at least two centuries before colonisation (Alenuma-Nimoh 2002). With their highly egalitarian structure, the Dagaab communities were organised into autonomous sub-territorial villages, each led by groups of elders. When it came to warfare and anti-slavery resistance, however, the Dagaab communities would place themselves under a central authority (Alenuma-Nimoh 2002).

The Sissala communities along the present-day border to Burkina Faso, were structured into villages in a similarly egalitarian and autonomous manner. Yet, whereas Dagaab livelihoods were mobile and expansionist, particularly from the eighteenth century, the Sissala were more sedentary. According to Lentz, many Sissala consider mobility a thing of the past: 'they became mobile not by their own choice, but because circumstances beyond their control … forced them to move' (Lentz 2013: 33). Such circumstances included efforts to escape slave-raiders, whether the latter entered the area along Arab trade routes from the north, thus pushing Sissala communities further south, or, as imperial colonisers from the south pushing them further north. In contrast to the Sissala's sedentary preferences, the Dagaab have 'developed a pronounced ethos of frontiersmanship, and privilege mobility over sedentariness' (Lentz 2013: 30). Despite it being an endeavour planned by the household, Dagaab agricultural expansionism led to their occupation of unpopulated and sparsely settled Sissala lands across the northernmost region of Ghana. As the Sissala had settled in the area before the Dagaab, they had managed to occupy the more favourable ecological areas, which again enabled them to maintain sedentary livelihoods.

These groups are still evident today. The Dagaab comprise more than a million people (Lentz 2013), while Sissala-speakers numbered roughly 140,000 in 2013 (Lentz 2013). More recently, both Sissala and Dagaab have engaged in mobility to access land with better ecological conditions, whether further south or in less populated areas of neighbouring Burkina Faso (Lentz 2013).[1]

The regional slave trade was a threat to northern communities for more than four centuries, first from Arab raiders entering from the north as early as the sixteenth century, and later along southbound routes linked to the transatlantic slave trade (Abiola, 2018). In the latter the northern groups were enslaved, while the southern groups positioned themselves as slave-traders. This led to the disintegration of the northern groups to the extent that an extensive north-south imbalance started to take shape. In precolonial times, however, the networks of the northern groups, with their strategic position close to the Arab trade routes, not only incurred risk: for northern communities specialising in trade, it gave them a strong position through which many maintained a territorial presence for several centuries (Ray, 2003; Goody, 1954). Given the resourcefulness of these northern kingdoms and

their long history of trade relations, besides that in slaves, one can ask whether a stronger position in the power dynamics associated with the southern areas could have been acquired if the effects of the slave trade had been less extensive. Such reflections must remain speculation, however.

In pre-colonial times, individuals in the Akan and Fante states were bound to the state through tax payments and military service, and there was a greater degree of autonomy within the social structure. For instance, everyone, even immigrants, had the right to hold land in principle. However, when the political context started to become turbulent, so did tenurial security within these states, and the power balance shifted towards a national authority (Berry, 1993).

Common to all kingdoms, clans and chiefdoms was the fact that their governance structures were organised around the political authority of chiefs, clan heads, and kings or queen mothers. As such, the chieftaincy system has its roots in pre-colonial times, and moreover it has endured and evolved through the eras of colonisation and post-colonisation to become an integral part of the power structure in the system of governance in present-day Ghana. In addition, environmental change and climatic variation were always important factors in the mobility of the various communities, with the marginalised occupying ecologically less favourable areas and creating strategic alliances in order to cope with warfare, hunger and drought.

The slave trade and north-south dynamics: colonial Ghana

In 1822, the British proclaimed the Gold Coast a British colony, the Northern Territories and the Asante Kingdom being incorporated in 1902. Interest in Ghana revolved around gold, slavery and the arms trade as part of the triangular trade between Europe, West Africa and the American colonies (Lemberg-Pedersen, 2019). As noted above, the population in the northern regions were subjected to slavery by slave-traders from the coastal and central regions, or indeed from northern-based slave-raiders, who then transported the enslaved to southern-based kings or on to the European-held forts and trading stations on the coast. There were different reasons for the north-south division. In part, it was a geo-political division, as the harsh environmental conditions prevented the European colonisers from establishing a military presence further inland from the coast. Instead they established garrison stations and relied on military alliances with kings, chiefs and warlords in the interior. The British colonisers did not have a monopoly in extracting slaves, nor were they the exclusive users of slaves. Indeed, slaves were a commodity used by a wide range of powerful entities, being traded or offered as tributes to nurture alliances, for instance (Schramm, 2007). Thus, as powerful warlords, slave-traders from the southern territories, armed with European firearms, were able to penetrate the densely forested areas by establishing alliances with warlords elsewhere. This position offered them a niche in linking slaves to the European forts on the coast, thus enabling the establishment of an economy based on displacement (Lemberg-Pedersen, 2019).

Although the governing units in the north retained their form and function under colonial rule, the region was subsumed within the wider political entity that

became the colony. These circumstances led to an extensive drainage of human resources that effectively brought about the political subordination of the northern regions, as the different groups lost their autonomy. Once this subordinate position had been established, regional favouritism and patrimonial relationships between ordinary people and powerholders maintained the south's wealth in natural resources and related tax revenues even after colonial rule had ended. This further deprived the north from taking part in economic investments and in the country's economic potential on a par with the south.

As elsewhere in their African colonies, the British introduced indirect rule in 1878, which supported labour mobility in relation to mining and farming activities (Abdul-Gafaru, 2017). In doing so, the colonial state refrained from opposing the existing governance structure and instead demoted the former kings to chiefs and integrated them into the colonial governance system as 'traditional authorities'. As such, the pre-colonial leaders lost their armies and autonomy as independent powerholders along with their exclusive say in legislative, administrative, executive and judicial matters. However, despite losing power at the state level, they maintained a degree of legitimacy, authority and sovereignty throughout the colonial and post-colonial periods, especially locally and regionally. In 1925 provincial councils of chiefs were established, followed by a Native Administration Ordinance defining and regulating the chiefs' powers and areas of jurisdiction, including customary law (Ray, 2003: 87).

The fact that the pre-colonial leaders' local and regional authority was left undisputed partly reflects the colonial administration's realisation that, if they were to forcibly overpower the traditional authorities, they might produce an ungovernable situation in which locally anchored traditional leaders would mobilise support to reject and challenge the colonial administration and its attempt to control the 'state'. This was especially the case since decentralised despotism was necessitated by the low numbers of colonial staff (Mamdani, 1996), limited to the coastal forts and the strong control that traditional rulers wielded over their territories (Boone, 2003). This devolved colonial administration meant that a complex governance system started to gain weight in which local government would continue to enjoy a degree of authority. Until the 1950s the traditional authorities continued to rule through elected town and municipal councils, de facto constituting local government (Abdul-Gafaru, 2017: 88). The autonomy of traditional authorities during colonial rule is an important element in explaining the role and power of a system of governance of which they continue to be an integral part.

From modernisation to economic crisis

On 6 March 1957 Ghana[1] became the first African colony to be declared an independent country. A parliamentary multi-party system was introduced, and Kwame Nkrumah became the first president. Nkrumah was a firm proponent of modernisation, with his emphasis on industrialisation and education. Economic development was envisioned as being more inclusive; service provision was to be strengthened and inequality reduced. Given Nkrumah's Pan-Africanist ideals, in 1956 Ghana became one of the founding members of the non-aligned movement. Across the continent, Nkrumah's leadership provided inspiration for nationalist movements and ideas of Pan-African unity extending to the formalisation of Pan-African collaborative initiatives such as the Organisation of African Unity, launched in 1963 (predecessor to the African Union) (Aryeetey and Harrigan, 2000). Economic and political optimism thrived in the late 1950s and early 1960s, as the vibrant agricultural and mining sectors boosted and stabilised the economy.

Nkrumah invested heavily in infrastructural projects, including the commissioning of the hydroelectric Akosombo dam in 1966. As a testimony to modernisation and development in Nkrumah's Ghana, the dam's construction created the world's largest artificial lake, Lake Volta, covering a total area of 8,500 km[2] (Tamakloe 1994). Nkrumah himself and the ruling party, the Convention People's Party (CPP), promoted the project for purposes of making electric power accessible, job creation, improving fishing grounds, introducing transportation routes on Lake Volta and possibly introducing mechanised agriculture (Miescher, 2014). However, the consequences of this project were not restricted to changing the ecological dynamics brought about by flooding large parts of the Volta River Basin. The optimism generated by Nkrumah's presidency turned into a crisis from the mid-1960s, following an economic downturn and the transformation of Ghana into a one-party state in 1964. He was overthrown in the first of a series of military coups and regimes that shaped the nature of governance in Ghana for the next twenty years.

A further military coup in 1981 brought Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings to power. Banning all political parties, Rawlings established the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to govern the country (Nugent 1995). Under PNDC Law 42, Rawlings consolidated his power by suspending the constitution and assuming state powers that enabled his regime to take control of the lives of ordinary Ghanaian citizens. Rawlings' time in power is generally recognised as one of political persecution, economic crisis and food scarcities (Nugent, 1995).

The Ghanaian economy experienced severe challenges. GDP growth rates were mainly negative, and three-digit inflation figures were recorded in the 1980s. In response, the government launched an Economic Recovery Programme (ERP) in 1983 and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in 1988 (Asamoah, 2014). As

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[1] The name 'Ghana' was chosen with reference to the trans-Sahelian Kingdom of Ghana that flourished between the sixth and thirteenth centuries. The country made independent in 1957 included the United Nations Trust Territory of British Togoland (the present-day Volta Region), which, following a 1956 referendum, was declared part of the Gold Coast.

was the case for many other developing countries, in Ghana these IMF- and World Bank-supported programmes led to the privatisation of state enterprises and excessive borrowing from international institutions. The adopted policies included the removal of subsidies, the introduction of user fees for health and water, and trade liberalisation. Another consequence of Rawlings' authoritarian regime was the large-scale emigration of the intelligentsia and political opponents, as well as labour migration by ordinary workers to other African and Western countries. A diasporic lobby opposed to Rawlings also emerged during these years (Mohan, 2008).

The SAPs led to a worsening economic situation for the poor, with rising unemployment and an increased burden of debt. Nevertheless, the financial results also included a decline in the inflation rate to about 30%, and GDP growth from 0.5% in 1980 to 5% by 1985. As such, the SAPs generally laid the foundations for the recent economic and political transformation in Ghana. From independence until the late 1980s, local and regional government institutions were underfunded and subjected to a process of government devolution, in which the central government's local control was strengthened at the expense of the local authorities (Mohan 2008). This started to change in 1988 when Rawlings introduced local government structures in the form of District Assemblies, partly spurred by World Bank and lender demands for 'good governance' and fiscal accountability (Mohan, 1996).

Free elections and two systems of governance: present-day Ghana

The 1992 Constitution identified the nature and representation of government with constitutional democracy and multi-party rule through the establishment of the Fourth Republic. The new constitution separated the judicial system from the legislative and executive arms of government, introduced universal adult suffrage and established a range of freedoms, such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of religion, freedom of association, and freedom of movement within, from and into Ghana. Additionally, the new constitution preserved the traditional authorities with their own rights and responsibilities as, effectively, a parallel system of governance to the statutory system. Both statutory and traditional institutions were given mandates to ensure access to services and resources, including education, health and land, albeit within different spheres of society. Whereas the formal institutions are well established within the grander regulatory frameworks, they tend to be weak in exercising their mandates locally. However, traditional institutions involving socially shared rules and expectations have proved effective in sanctioning the day-to-day regulations of people's access to services locally, particularly in rural areas (Yaro, 2010).

Since 1992, though election results have been disputed, the outcomes have ultimately been accepted by the losing parties, an indicator of a maturing democratic system for some political observers (see, for instance, IMF 2000). Despite the existence of a variety of political parties (with 24 registered political parties in 2018), Ghana has become a de facto two-party system in which the president is banned from sitting for more than two periods of office. In 1992,

Rawlings won the parliamentary and presidential elections with the social democratic National Democratic Party (NDC), ruling until the NDC lost to the neoliberal National Patriotic Party (NPP) led by John Agyekum Kufour in the 2000 elections. Eight years later, in 2008, the NDC won the elections again, and the late John Atta Mills became president. Since 2017 the NPP has been back in power, with Nana Akufo-Addo as the current president.

In recent years, governments have worked to extend the economic transformation initiated by Rawlings, and several national development programmes and structural reforms have been implemented, all aimed at reducing poverty and promoting economic development. These include the Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II: 2006-2010) and the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA I: 2010-2013; GSGDA II 2014-2017). Ghana reached low middle-income status in 2010, and in 2011 the country's GDP peaked at 14% as production of offshore crude oil production was initiated. That said, the development strategies continue to face developmental challenges related to high rates of inequality and poverty.

As a regional player, Ghana played an instrumental role in the foundation of ECOWAS, the regional political and economic union, and is a member of the African Union (AU). As a strong player in both ECOWAS and the AU, Ghana has repeatedly contributed military forces to actively support peacekeeping missions in the ECOWAS region, as well as across the continent. For instance, Ghana was among the main contributors to the AU's military support to the Sudan (Darfur) between 2004 and 2007 (Møller 2009).

The governance system(s)
The Local Government Law of 1988 and the 1992 constitution divided the system of state governance into two distinct spheres, national and local. The decentralised nature of local government was then implemented through the Local Government Act of 1993 (Act 462). Local government, with the District Assemblies (DA) as its fulcrum, was further endorsed along with the establishment of the District Assemblies' Common Fund (DACF), which directed 10% of total government revenues to be used for District Assembly capital works (CLGF, 2018). The assemblies are autonomous planning, budgeting and implementation units led by a government-appointed District Chief Executive (DCE). The elected members of the assemblies function as 'the linchpin between communities and the DA, both articulating community needs and demands to the DA and communicating information from the DA to communities' (Crawford, 2010: 96).

Links between assemblies and local constituencies are structured into sub-structural units (Urban, Zonal, Area or Town Councils and Unit Committees) (Crawford, 2010; CLGF, 2018). The assemblies can also delegate specific implementation of their activities to these sub-structural units (Awhoi, 2010). Whereas the sub-structural units do not have any legislative powers, the assemblies have the responsibility for general administration in the areas under their administrative jurisdiction. This includes responsibility for service provision in areas including basic education, health, environmental protection and

sanitation. In addition, each region has a Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) consisting of the region's traditional authorities and representatives from the district assemblies. They oversee the assemblies' procedures and are responsible for coordinating development initiatives regionally. Here we see the inclusion of traditional authorities into the system of state-based local governance. This has certain consequences, including different systems of authorisation, where one is rooted in elections and representation and the other in traditional leaders reliant on community authorisation. Moreover, there are different ideas of citizenship in terms of the individual's different rights and responsibilities to the formal state and the traditional authorities respectively, the one possibly undermining the other in overlapping areas of jurisdiction and decision-making in practice.[2]

The chieftaincy institution has been incorporated into Ghana's various constitutions since independence, though with shifting power and independence from governments (Brempong, 2006). In practice, the chieftaincies' proximity to and integration into local communities across the country continue to give them a greater role, especially in rural areas, where their jurisdiction takes place in spheres that are separate from the state. Though officially banned from participation in party politics, the chieftaincy institution is both contested and political 'because of its associations with authority and power, and as a result of its politicisation by successive governments and parties' (Crook, 2005: 1). Like the colonial administration, present-day government depends on chiefs to provide the support and stability that enables it to function.

The qualifications for becoming a chief include seniority, a royal lineage, higher education, a successful career, appointment by an oracle and even a background involving international migration (Kleist, 2011). The traditional leader is selected by a group of kingmakers consisting of male and female members, also of royal lineage. The appointment of chiefs, especially of high-ranking ones, is often subject to contestation and sometimes prolonged conflicts. Yet, even after chiefs have been appointed, they may still be dethroned (or de-stooled) for abuse, misconduct or unlawful appointment. Many Ghanaians consider themselves to be the subjects of their respective chiefs while simultaneously identifying as full citizens of the Republic of Ghana (Ray 2003).

As such, chieftaincy institutions form a separate section of or addition to the state in the servicing and governing of the latter's citizens, rather than merely holding subordinate functions to the state (Odotei and Awedoba, 2006).[3] Without the approval of the traditional authorities, the assemblies and other government agencies cannot function. Eighty percent of the land continues to be held as trust

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[2] For instance, if a couple file for divorce, this must be agreed by both the traditional authorities and the state for it to be fully effected. The main type of marriage formalisation is that authorised by the traditional authorities, yet it is also the most difficult type for authorising divorces, which may only be given under extreme circumstances such as where witchcraft has been involved. For that reason, separated couples will often proceed to new relationships and marriages with only a state-processed divorce and an unresolved traditional marriage. In local disputes in general, citizens can often choose between customary and state jurisdiction in seeking resolutions.

[3] For a list of traditional rulers from 1510 onwards, see https://www.worldstatesmen.org/Ghana_native.html.

land by the stool or skin[4] of the different traditional authorities in accordance with customary law, while 10% is held by the central government for public development (Bob-Milliar 2009). The traditional authorities therefore control resource distribution and use, and they can mobilise resources for community projects.[5] In particular, they act as custodians of natural resources but are also central to dispute settlements, the codification of customary law and the organisation of communal labour (Yaro et al., 2015; Boafo-Arthur, 2003; Ubink, 2007).[6]

Most land in Ghana continues to be held as trust land by the traditional authorities – none of the land acts have changed this. Additionally, there is a distinction between land itself and natural resources, whether beneath the ground, such as minerals and oil, or above-ground such as timber. For instance, while all forests in Ghana are owned by landholding communities, who are often represented by the traditional authorities, forest reserves are managed by a state agency, the Forest Commission.

Outside state forest reserves, forests are under the control of individual and communal owners, but all off-reserve timber resources are legally vested in the state 'in trust' for the owners. Thus, while individual and communal landowners are the custodians of trees outside the reserves, management and utilisation rights are vested in the state (Oppon, 2004; Teye, 2008). Similarly, the central government is responsible for collecting and managing revenues (royalties and rents) from the extraction of minerals and oil. There is usually a formula for sharing the revenues from these resources that guarantees traditional authorities and communities a share. However, in some cases the local community does not receive a significant share of the natural resource (Franck and Hansen, 2014). Local chiefs have facilitated these transactions without sharing the benefits with the community, while in other cases state institutions have done the same, reaping the benefits of the lucrative revenues for the centralised institutions (Hirons et al., 2018).

Key governance-related tendencies
In this first section, certain tendencies on governance start to show, enabling the subsequent discussion of possible links with climate and mobility. This refers to forms of governance in which the nature of 'authorisation' (accountability, social contract, etc.) can potentially be linked to imposed mobility (such as enslavement), international migration and different forms of internal (im)mobility practices.

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[4] The traditional authorities south of the Black Volta river are called stool land, referring to the stools that the traditional leader sits on. North of the Black Volta river, the traditional leaders sit on the skins of animals, and the territory under each leader's jurisdiction is referred to as belonging to the skin.

[5] For instance, the Asantehene, Ghana's most powerful chief, obtained World Bank funding for a heritage project and recently helped secure Ghana a 174 million USD grant for education from the World Bank (see https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Otumfuo-helps-Ghana-to-get-174m-from-World-Bank-859342)

[6] A more recent non-statutory chieftaincy title is 'Development Chief and 'Development Queen Mother, an honorary title awarded to individuals who have contributed to local development, for example, setting up health centres, schools and amenities for electricity and drinking water (Bob-Milliar, 2009). Such titles do not require a royal background but rather constitute 'a poverty reduction strategy and an appreciation of their efforts to the community' (Kleist, 2011: 646). Such titles are often given to migrants, including non-Ghanaians.

Another key tendency in the first section looks at how the elements of governance intersect with land rights and processes around the allocation of ownership and usury rights. The role of land rights in studies of livelihood adaptations is twofold, being both an important dimension in its own right, given the centrality of access to land for many households, and secondly as a means of investigating the characteristics and roles of different political authorities.

The mandate of the central state compared to the traditional authorities is another key conclusion from this section on governance dynamics, not least with regard to how rights are exercised in the extraction of natural resources and in relation to investments in large-scale infrastructure projects. The changing status of the traditional authorities over time is important in understanding the relationship with the statutory structures of the government. Here the greater autonomy and authority gained by the southern region and the subordination of the north, ensured not least by their respective experiences with the slave trade and subsequent initiation of large-scale developments projects, such as the Akosombo dam resettlement, is important. The latter exemplifies the functioning of the traditional authorities as instruments of the central state's pursuit of its modernisation ideals, to which we return in the following sections. Other factors alluded to in this section have relevance for what will be discussed in the following two sections. This includes reflections on whether ethnicity has been a factor determining adaptive strategies, for instance, in decisions over whether to move or to stay. The north-south division described in this section and its continuing implications is an aspect that intersects with the three core factors of governance policies, mobility-related factors and climate-induced coping strategies, to which the paper returns repeatedly.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

The agrarian nature of the economy and the importance of agriculture and natural resources in the livelihoods of the majority of the population in Ghana ensures that the state of the environment will be of central importance. Agriculture, forestry and fishing contributed some 60% to GDP in the 1960s, although this declined to 20% in 2016 with the greater development of the timber and oil sectors (the World Bank, 2020). The proportion of the population employed in the agricultural sector is 42%, making it the largest source of employment.

By approaching the environment and socio-political spheres as intrinsically linked, the importance of environmental factors for livelihoods, diverse forms of mobility, resource access and the potential for climate change adaptation is emphasised. This section provides a brief description of Ghana's climate and analyses the nature, effects and responses to climate change historically. The analysis is structured through a focus that centres on land (access, use and control), natural resources and livelihoods.

Current environmental challenges and response

Ghana lies within the tropical climate zone but is further divided into distinct agro-ecological zones, namely the Northern Savannah Zone (including the Sudan and Guinea Savannah), the Tropical Forest Zone (including the rainforest, the semi-deciduous forest and the transitional forest zone) and the Coastal Savannah Zone. These various zones, the environmental conditions and resources with which they are endowed and the ways they have been managed over time have contributed to the differences in livelihood and economic activities and in development trajectories across the country.

The susceptibility of the rural economy to poverty is underscored by the 2010 and 2017 censuses (GSS 2010, GSS 2017), which showed how the incidence of poverty continues to be significantly higher in the north of Ghana (see Figure 4).
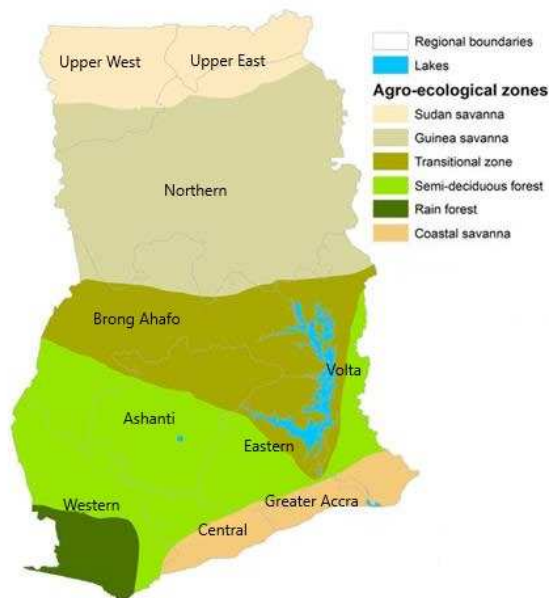
Figure 3. Agro-ecological zones in Ghana (adapted from Agric In Ghana Media 2018)

The north continues to be characterised by largely rural populations dependent on subsistence, rainfed agriculture in an environmental zone with very low rainfall and generally precarious environmental conditions. Yet, the censuses also reported that households across Ghana were less likely to be poor if household members were engaged as private employees or were self-employed in non-agricultural sectors compared to those engaged in the agricultural sector (GSS 2010, GSS 2017).
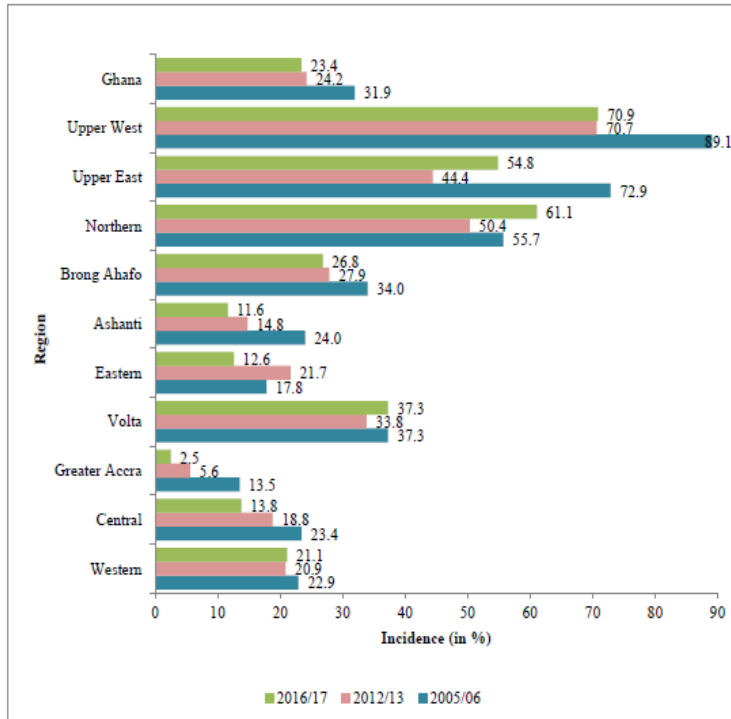
Figure 4. Poverty incidence (P0) by region (poverty line = GH¢1,314). The three regions in the north (Upper West, Upper East and Northern Region) are those with the highest incidence of poverty

Ghana's climate has already been experiencing changes linked to anthropogenic climate change. Since the 1960s, the mean annual temperature has risen by 1.0°C, an average of 0.21°C per decade (McSweeney et al., 2008). Temperatures are projected to rise further by 2.0°C and 3.9°C in 2050 and 2080 respectively (EPA, 2012; Asante and Amuakwa-Mensah, 2015). The annual amount of rainfall has declined by 20% since 1960 and is projected to decline further by 9-27% by 2100 (Minia, 2004). Rainfall is also projected to become increasingly variable, with fewer but more intense rainfall events.

Various institutions have continuously been involved in adaptation efforts, including formal government institutions,[7] NGOs and traditional authorities. These institutions are not only responsible for adaptation efforts, they may also play a role in supporting the development and livelihood conditions that shape the way climate-change impacts are experienced. The role of NGOs and informal institutions can also be extremely important, especially since the traditional authorities have significant legitimacy and power with regard to access to and the use of natural resources. However, due to the country's diversity in socio-economic conditions and adaptive capacity, institutional efforts are often complicated. Specifically, the strength of institutions may vary from urban to rural contexts and be more important for some population groups compared to others. The interplay of different types between households and institutions and the strategies that people adopt to cope with change are issues that have yet to be explored by research.

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[7] Relevant formal institutions include district assemblies, ministries and the National Disaster Mobilization Organizati on (NADMO).

Given the history of marginalisation and the high proportion of environmentally dependent livelihoods, it is the three northern regions that are likely to be most affected by climate change. The coastal savannah zone is also already seriously affected, though proximity to urban centres makes alternative livelihoods more accessible in the southern regions in general.

In combination with local contexts, these impacts may have wide-ranging effects on human health, livelihoods and future development. For human health, the incidence of diseases such as cholera is expected to increase, especially in low-lying urban areas affected by heavy rainfall events and coastal inundation (Minia et al., 2004). Fisheries' outputs – an important source of nutrition – are expected to decline significantly due to rising water temperatures, restrictions that are further exacerbated by increased overfishing by Chinese and EU vessels (Lucht, 2012). In the case of agriculture, rising temperatures and rainfall variability will threaten the viability of staple crops and yields. Lower rainfall will also affect water levels and may disrupt hydropower in the country. These examples indicate the diversity of climate-change impacts in their intersection with socio-economic and political dynamics and activities, as well as historical development trajectories and interventions.

As illustrated by Figure 3, Ghana has three different agro-ecological zones, underlining the fact that the effects of climate change will be felt differently in different regions. Box 2 exemplifies this by providing an overview of the impacts in the three northernmost regions.

Box 2. Climate change impacts in the northern regions of Ghana

Although there are variations, people's abilities to adapt are generally low in Ghana's northern regions, due to high poverty levels, reliance on environmentally dependent livelihoods and the lack of supporting interventions by state actors (Yaro, 2016; Yaro, Teye and Bawakyillenuo, 2016). On the individual household level, the lack of alternative livelihood and adaptive options has led some to adopt coping strategies that may undermine ecological conditions and livelihoods further in the longer term (Yaro, Teye and Bawakyillenuo, 2015). However, there are also structural conditions that complicate people's prospects of adapting. The historical marginalisation and continued underdevelopment of the north is a central factor here. For instance, the inadequate provision of economic infrastructure has weakened support for development and livelihood diversification in the north, at times even contributing to maladaptation (Yaro, Teye and Bawakyillenuo, 2015).

These abnormal changes have put pressure on people to apply adaptive strategies in the northern regions for several decades, following years of declining annual rainfall, changes in rainfall distribution, increasing temperatures and general unpredictability (Minia et al., 2004; Dietz et al., 2004; Owusu and Waylen, 2009; Van der Geest, 2011; Yaro, 2016). For the many northern smallholders, these changes entail increasing uncertainty and stress. The prolonged dry seasons and more frequent droughts cause farmers to move closer and closer to the riverbeds, and some may even start to plant inside them. When the sudden, shorter and more voluminous rainfall hits, it makes the dry riverbeds flood, causing the nutritious topsoil to wash away, together with nearby crops and plants. As conditions have worsened for both agriculture and human health, the impacts are already making the environmentally based livelihoods of the northern regions precarious (MFA Netherlands, 2018; Teye & Owusu, 2015). If these conditions continue and institutional support remains insufficient, people in the northern regions are likely to see their livelihoods further undermined, with water stress, food insecurity and displacement as the likely consequences.

Centralised and skewed: historical environmental repercussions

As described in the section starting at page 9 (The slave trade and north-south dynamics: colonial Ghana), British colonial interest was linked to the country's natural and human resources. These economic interests were fundamental in shaping colonial environmental management and establishing different development trajectories between different regions.

Mineral deposits are concentrated in southern Ghana, where mining companies were established and a gold rush turned their exploitation into a thriving industry in the early 1900s (Hilson, 2002). The European presence also became linked to increased cash-crop production in Ghana. This was especially evident in the

production of cocoa, introduced in 1897 (Ludlow 2012). The cash-crop boom was partially facilitated by infrastructural investments in the south aimed at supporting the mining sector. Railways were built to link urban centres and mining areas to the coast, but they simultaneously spurred other forms of investment, production and trade, including the cocoa trade (Jedwab and Moradi, 2012). Mining, cash-crop production and infrastructural investments in the south of colonial Ghana thus went hand in hand.

The marginalisation of the north had lasting implications for the area's development and relationship with the south (Jarawura and Smith, 2015). The slave trade caused the draining of human resources from the north in an environmental context that was already challenging in terms of subsistence and well-being. Throughout the colonial period, food shortages were regularly reported by colonial officials, linked to factors such as heavy rains damaging the crops, pests, human disease affecting labour, and food shortages in neighbouring areas. Food prices were driven up, encouraging a further transition towards cash-crop production in the northern regions, which in turn increased the demands on a limited food supply (Grischow and Weiss, 2011). These conditions contributed to an annual 'hungry season' in the months from May to August, an indicator of food insecurity that continues to the present day.

Efforts to address the developmental divide have proved inadequate not least due to the limited resources available (Grischow and Weiss, 2011). Though officials did monitor poor agricultural conditions and the risk of famine, crop failures continued to occur as the rains failed through the 1940s and famine relief efforts were at best very limited, aimed primarily at managing the effects of drought and mitigating the risk of famine. In the 1950s, additional interventions included early-warning systems, land-management programmes and changes to production, including agricultural diversification and mechanised farming schemes. Nevertheless, crop failures and undernourishment persisted (Grischow and Weiss, 2011).

Colonial land management also set its mark upon the country. Land policies and management clearly illustrate the confluence of the environmental and socio-political spheres. Land issues are 'as much about the scope and structure of authority as about access to resources, with land claims being tightly wrapped in questions of authority, citizenship, and the politics of jurisdiction' (Lund and Boone, 2013). In colonial Ghana, despite the British extending their control through indirect rule, forms of land ownership and access saw notable changes. These changes affected the nature and exercise of political authority as well as everyday access to land and resources by the population. For example, the Land and Native Rights Ordinance of 1927 classified all land in the Northern Territories as 'native lands', but put them under the control of the Governor, which effectively meant that land could be appropriated for public use without compensation, including for the construction of infrastructure, as in the case of the Akosombo dam project many years later (Lund 2009).

At the time of independence in 1957, the country could be characterised as having greater infrastructure and investment in the south in comparison with the marginalised north, and a central political authority with great power over land and resource access, as well as being a determining factor in the role and nature of employment. This provided the political and economic setting for the newly independent state and served to shape the livelihoods and mobility practices of the population for decades to come.

Centralisation and modernist environmental investments

After independence, Nkrumah's modernisation approach took the form of environmental and resource management. Agriculture was highly significant for the economy and livelihoods, and Nkrumah's vision of economic development was partly based on large-scale agricultural transformation (Green, 1965). This was expressed in major modernisation efforts and larger industries, reflected in a focus on cocoa-farming, mechanisation and large-scale farming (Grischow and Weiss, 2011). Such efforts were promoted through the establishment of the Akosombo Dam, a hydroelectric dam on the Volta River that produced Lake Volta – at the time, the world's largest man-made lake (see Box 3). Environmental management and agricultural initiatives were large parts of this project, and the Nkrumah government's socialist development approach necessitated extensive state involvement, the appropriation of land, collectivisation and the provision of technology and machinery in resettlement areas (Yaro, 2013). Yet, the plans for cooperative cash-crop farming and the installation of certain amenities in the model township were unable to meet expectations, and Nkrumah's socialist ideals of communal action, ended up causing problems of poor integration and consequent resistance to cooperative decision-making (Tamakloe, 1994). As such, to the resettled population, the Akosombo dam project came to stand for state neglect and failed modernisation.

Independence also entailed new constraints on people's relationship to the land (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). A series of land acts in 1960 and 1962 extended central state control over the land, allowing the president to acquire land compulsorily, for instance, for state farms and factories, without consulting local populations or compensating those working the land (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). Central control also increased regarding stool lands. Revenues from land owned by the traditional authorities, previously split between the colonial and traditional authorities, was increasingly shifted to state control after independence (Ray, 2003). In the south, Nkrumah vested land in particular stools in order to undermine the political opposition. As a result, central authorities' extensive power over land was also used politically (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001).

Under the string of military regimes starting with Rawlings, what can in hindsight be considered neo-liberal environmental management continued, though with a focus on the market replacing the socialist agenda (Grischow and Weiss, 2011, Yaro, 2013). State farms were dismantled, and efforts were focused on providing credit and inputs to individuals, though significant loans went to elites such as civil servants and chiefs. With many places in the south overpopulated, the

authorities sought to develop agriculture in the north to support food supplies for the rest of the country. However, many of the resultant modernisation projects and irrigation schemes had mixed results, with the poorest often failing to accrue major benefits. For instance, interventions to encourage a shift from traditional subsistence crops to cash crops contributed to increased food shortages (Yaro, 2013). Additionally, these interventions in agriculture were generally challenged by frequent droughts and economic fluctuations (Grischow and Weiss, 2011). Ultimately, the ideal of modernist development that was characteristic of this period did not achieve the broad-based economic growth and development that had been promoted and anticipated (Mohan, 1996).

Structural adjustment and deconcentrated administration

The period following 1981 was marked by the Structural Adjustment Programme and the devolution of administration and service provision to sub-national levels. Environmental management was also decentralised as part of this process, but resource users continued to lack representation, and the system of governance did not fully reflect their interests (Mohan, 1996; Amanor and Brown, 2003).

The ethos of economic development underpinning the reforms required the formalisation of land management and ownership as a basis for investment and development. The Land Title Registration Act of 1986 provided for the registration of land under both common law and customary law, and for the registration of groups as well as individuals (Kasanga and Kotey, 2001). However, the inclusive design of the Act failed to clarify the complex relationship between formal and customary land tenure (Lund, 2009). Issues regarding access to land were particularly tenuous (Blocher, 2006), this ultimately enhancing the degree of ambiguity that mainly affected already marginalised groups.

The 1970s and 1980s were also a time of worsening environmental conditions, with droughts across the Sahel. The impacts of these environmental challenges were especially acute for the rural poor with environmentally dependent livelihoods. Limited government support and intervention programmes, coupled with increasing privatisation and user fees, exacerbated the stress on households. For agriculture, this meant an end to agricultural subsidies, government provision of fertilisers and rural development programmes (Laube et al., 2013). A 1993 analysis showed that agricultural outcomes varied in different parts of the country, depending on how different groups were affected differently by institutional arrangements. Thus, while land-owning farmers frequently enhanced forest cover through e.g. tree preservation and fallow enrichment, such efforts were often countered when incoming smallholders started to farm under uncertain land-tenancy arrangements. As such, processes of land intensification at times came to dominate, leading to savannah-ization and soil degradation (see also Amanor, 1993). Equally, diverse practices in farming and the collection of non-timber forest products affected the quality of forest patches (Leach, Mearns and Scoones, 1999).

Despite the general regeneration of the environment in northern Ghana, pressure on agricultural land increased, and farmers reported lower yields (Van der Geest,

2011). At the same time, the area experienced both droughts and floods linked to anthropogenic climate change (Yaro 2013).

Take-aways: environmental and climatic layers

Given the different agro-ecological zones in Ghana, challenges differ in the different regions of the country. The rural poor with environmentally dependent livelihoods are especially vulnerable to climate-change impacts. Historically, some interventions have been designed in terms of a politics of extraction from certain areas, whereas in other periods the prospects of modernisation have shaped interventions to, for instance, develop agricultural practices in vulnerable areas. Neither approach to intervention has been able to adequately improve the inequality and poverty rates of the vulnerable regions and households, and individuals still risk opting for maladaptive strategies that may ultimately worsen inequality and poverty rates still further (Owusu-Daaku, 2018).

MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

As a simultaneous sending, destination and transit country, Ghana has a long history of migration, both voluntary and forced, with a mixture of internal, regional and international movements (Akyeampong, 2000). Long- and short-distance mobility has been part of life in Ghana for centuries, whether for livelihood purposes or embedded in larger geopolitical transformations. Yet, even though mobility was integrated into livelihood strategies long before the colonial era, the mobility patterns established through colonial policies continue to be significant, as indicated in the previous sections (Van der Geest, 2011). Ghanaian migration today is highly diverse, including highly skilled professionals, students, traders, low-skilled labourers, asylum-seekers and family re-unifications. Despite this diversity, much migration is embedded in social relations and family-related practices of reciprocity, mutual support and care that may stretch across generations (Kleist, 2017; Cassiman, 2010; Geschiere and Gugler, 1998). This also indicates that migration and mobility may constitute imagined pathways to a better or more liveable future, whether located inside or outside Ghana.

In this section, we provide an overview of migration and mobility practices in Ghana, linked to historical migration patterns and links, and the spill-over effects with environmental factors, labour issues, institutional involvement, and household livelihoods and practices. We start by discussing the dynamics of historical mobility, with Akosombo Dam as a case study illuminating some of the different dynamics we have alluded to so far in the working paper. Then follows a discussion of contemporary tendencies and their embeddedness in national and international regimes of mobility and migration governance. Finally, we return to the case of north-south disparities in relation to mobility patterns.

Historical mobility dynamics

Trans-African migrations, such as the trans-Saharan trade routes, have linked localities in Ghana with other parts of the continent for centuries, whether through trade or immigration, and many ethnic groups emphasise migration as constitutive of their narratives of origin. Likewise, the immigration of European traders, missionaries and military personnel from the late fifteenth century transformed the country and region. In particular, the extremely violent mobility and societal transformation brought about by the transatlantic slave trade was marked by displacement as well as forced mobility and immobility. In addition, deliberate policies of forced labour migration[8] during colonisation drew labourers to the mines and export-crop enclaves in the south (Bening, 1975). The neglected development of infrastructure and agriculture in the north created further disparities between the north and south of Ghana. The emergence of modern amenities and possibilities for non-farm income in the south made this region particularly attractive during times of poor agricultural performance (Songsore and Denkabe, 1995).

Generally, the prosperity of the colonial government would not have been possible without the huge amounts of labour from the north (Chambers, 1980: 10). For example, the colonial government's report of 1914 emphasised the growth of the cocoa industry in the fertile forest areas of central Ghana. Investments here required labour to be imported from the northern regions. Therefore, investments in industrial growth were made at the cost of further underdevelopment of the north, where the share of development was small and the loss of able-bodied workers obstructed the daily rhythm of life (Yaro, 2004). Independence-era governments in Ghana have not been able to correct the imbalance in development between north and south, and consequently the motivation for especially young people to migrate to the south in search of a better life than what is possible in the north remain (van der Geest, 2011). With respect to international mobility patterns, Ghanaians served in the British army as soldiers during the world wars and travelled to the UK as educational migrants. In the latter case, talented youth studied to become administrators and bureaucrats for the colonial administration and, towards and after independence in 1957, for the independent republic (Peil, 1995). While Ghana attracted many African migrants during the first years of independence, particularly for mining and plantation work (Falola and Usman, 2009), this changed when the political and economic situations deteriorated from the mid-1960s. This was an uncertain and fluctuating period for Ghanaians, with political insecurity and imposed modernisation projects that set new conditions for people's mobility. Although a lot of investment did provide improved infrastructure and labour for some, much of the success came with unforeseen social repercussions, such as increased inequality and forced migration. An example of such a modernisation project is the Akosombo dam and its associated resettlements.

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[8] Labour quotas were imposed on kings and chiefs, who dared not ignore them for fear of punishment (Songsore and Denkabe, 1995).

Box 3. The Akosombo dam: propaganda, agro-economic expectations and resettlement

The scale and design of the Akosombo Dam exemplifies the high modernist ideals of the post-independence period. It constituted a government initiative that, on the one hand, generated a foundation for environmentally friendly electricity and work for skilled and unskilled labourers, while on the other hand it carried both ecological and social implications of unanticipated magnitude.

The promoters of the project were less worried about its social and environmental impacts, as they considered the basin areas to be largely uninhabited (Tamakloe, 1994). In an effort to highlight the positive elements of resettlement, Nkrumah's government declared that 'no one would be made worse off as a result of the creation of the lake' (Miescher, 2014: 187), a statement that became the official mantra of dam resettlement, carrying promises of better livelihoods. Ninety percent of the livelihoods of the people in the areas planned for flooding were based on subsistence farming and livestock keeping, and the Ministry of Agriculture saw their large-scale resettlement as an opportunity to convert the system of agriculture into a cash-crop economy with mechanised and intense cultivation and the cooperative farming of cash crops. This would overcome the already burgeoning shortages of arable land in the southeast of the country. As such, the Preparatory Commission suggested strategies to create a type of model citizen and settlement (Miescher, 2014: 188).

The promoted plans placed enormous pressure on the Volta River Authority, which oversaw the resettlement of 80,000 people (Tsikata, 2006). However, contrary to the predictions of the planners and the political promises, agriculture in the resettlement areas did not automatically provide higher living standards. Although the cooperative cash-crop farming projects were highly subsidised, they turned out to be short-lived. Smallholders simply avoided participating in the cooperative farms and preferred to focus on their own small plots of land. However, the farmers' own farming methods were impacted when the promised seeds and fertilisers fell short. When a large-scale increase in the demand for local foodstuffs was triggered, farmers gradually turned towards previous practices of subsistence farming (Miescher, 2014).

Despite the intense promotion of the Akosombo dam resettlement scheme, some people still refused to move. When the flooding took place, many of the model townships remained unfinished with raw and wet cement and had only reached the first stage of construction with single-room houses, the smallest of which were c. 11m[2]. As the architecture of the model houses had not taken the family structures of the resettled population[1] into consideration, they were in many cases considered unfit by those who were supposed to move there[1] (Lumsden, 1973; Tamakloe, 1994).

> The traditional authorities had been instrumental in both pushing the Volta River Authority for the establishment of certain modern amenities in the model townships and in convincing communities to move. Yet even some of them refused to move after learning that they too would be confined to one-room houses that were far from meeting the standards of their former palaces (Miescher, 2014).
>
> The design of the new housing restricted the resettled families from fulfilling the norms associated with the roles of being a good wife, a good husband, a good son or daughter, or a hospitable landlord to one's visitors. The increased social densities aggravated domestic quarrels and affected social cohesion. In effect, the household structures in the model townships changed and produced nuclear families where some family members spent some of their time elsewhere or simply slept outside the houses (Lumsden, 1973). In some areas, problems included conflicts over authority, poor inter-ethnic relations and dependence on relief food from the World Food Program (Lumsden, 1973; Miescher, 2014).

The economic crisis of the 1970s and onwards and the intense droughts of that era were an important hallmark for migration within and from Ghana. Falling per capita income, decay of public services, falling productivity of labour, collapse of state enterprises, neglect of peasant agriculture and massive corruption made life especially difficult for ordinary Ghanaians. Many sought alternatives by migrating to countries in the region, including Nigeria and Ivory Coast (Songsore, 1992). In 1983, however, between 1.5 to 2 million Ghanaian labour migrants were expelled from Nigeria, followed by a smaller number in 1985 (Van Hear, 1998). This did not restrict people from making use of migration to seek security and better livelihoods within and outside the continent. Throughout the 1980s, during Rawlings' controlling political regime, large parts of the educated strata and political opposition left Ghana to seek asylum beyond the region, in particular to Germany, the UK and the US. Ghanaian migration to Libya also emerged in this period, following then President Rawlings' links with Colonel Gaddafi. These took off especially in the 1990s, when Gaddafi was actively welcoming sub-Saharan migrants into Libya (Bredeloup and Pliez, 2011; Hamood, 2006).

Contemporary mobility patterns and regimes of mobility

With the launch of the fourth Republic and the introduction of parliamentary democracy in 1992, the political situation stabilised. Ghanaian out-migration continued to grow and diversify, though in concert with global migration trends when it came to destinations, migration practices, types of migrants and attention to female migrants (Castles, De Haas and Miller, 2014). In addition to western Europe and North America, new destinations emerged in China, Latin America and the Middle East. Estimates of the number of Ghanaians living outside the

country range from 1.5 million (Quartey, 2009) in 2005 to about 800,000 in 2015[9] (MGSoG, 2017), indicating the significance of international migration, as well as the problem of obtaining accurate data. Return migration to Ghana also started reappearing in the early to mid-1990s, following the change of government, and increased further during the 2000s (Ammassari, 2009; Black and Castaldo, 2008; Black, King and Tiemoko, 2003; Kleist, 2015; Schoumaker et al., 2013; Wong, 2013).

It is important to emphasise, however, that a major share, if not the largest, of Ghanaian migrants live in one of the neighbouring countries or elsewhere in West Africa and are estimated to constitute between 42% (MGSoG, 2017) and 71% (Quartey, 2009) of all non-resident Ghanaians. Likewise, immigration to Ghana from other West African countries is significant, even though it accounts for fewer migrants than emigration. According to a recent migration profile, the number of migrants from neighbouring and other West African countries reach about 400,000, including a smaller number of refugees and asylum-seekers, especially from Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Liberia (MGSoG, 2017). Migration to other parts of Africa is substantial as well, including to North Africa for work or onward migration to Europe or the Middle East, Libya having been a key destination country until the outbreak of the civil war in 2011.

Following the introduction of restrictive regimes of mobility, however (Schiller and Salazar, 2013), Ghanaian migrants have also been caught up in large-scale deportations and other kinds of forced relocation. The National Disaster Management Organisation (NADMO) and the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) estimate that about 12,200 Ghanaians were deported from Libya alone between 2002 and 2012, followed by another 1,415 in 2014 (Kleist, 2017: 325). Others have been evacuated from migration crises. In March 2011, during the height of the Libyan civil war, about 19,000 Ghanaian labour migrants were flown or bussed from Libya (Bob-Milliar and Bob-Milliar, 2013; Zampagni et al., 2017). Though evacuated rather than deported, many returned empty-handed and with few local livelihood prospects, aggravated by the effect of dwindling remittances being sent back to support local economies and the scarcity of farm-work opportunities in the dry season. Hence for evacuees and deportees alike, forced relocation may result in stigmatisation, socio-economic marginalisation and/or high-risk re-migration (Kleist, 2017, 2018). Involuntary immobility (Carling, 2002; Lubkemann, 2008) also affects Ghanaian migration, as many migrants end up stranded in camps or forest areas, or imprisoned in North African prisons or detention centres, with considerable distress being caused by squalid living conditions and human rights abuses.

These forms of mobility governance are closely linked to restrictive European and African regimes of mobility (Schiller and Salazar, 2013) that regulate the mobility and immobility of different groups of citizens. While mass expulsions are not a new phenomenon in African contexts, the continued emphasis on deportations and assisted return migration reflects tightening European immigration legislation

[9] As the discrepancy in the numbers reflect, there is no authoritative number of Ghanaians living outside Ghana, reflecting general difficulties of accurate migration statistics.

and border control efforts, measures that may take place on African 'transit and sending' countries' territories as part of the EU's policy of externalising border controls (Andersson, 2014; Nyberg-Sørensen and Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2013). Accordingly, efforts to strengthen migration management are often financed by the EU or EU member states and are implemented through IOM programmes, a trend that can also be found in Ghana.

As for migration within the West African region, the ECOWAS *1979 Protocol relating to Free Movement of Persons, Residence and Establishment* has granted West African citizens the right to move and settle within other West African countries for more than four decades now, a principle that has recently been reaffirmed (Kleist and Bjarnesen, 2019). This implies that migration from Ghana to other West African countries is not irregular or illegal, as western countries often assume. Rather, a Ghanaian citizen has the right to travel to the very borders of Libya and Algeria, despite possibly having to deal with extortion from corrupt border officials, as well as insecurity and lawlessness in some areas and borderlands. Nevertheless, the ECOWAS protocol highlights a tension in mobility governance within the sub-region today: on the one hand, migration is increasingly regulated and restricted; on the other hand, it is facilitated and acknowledged.
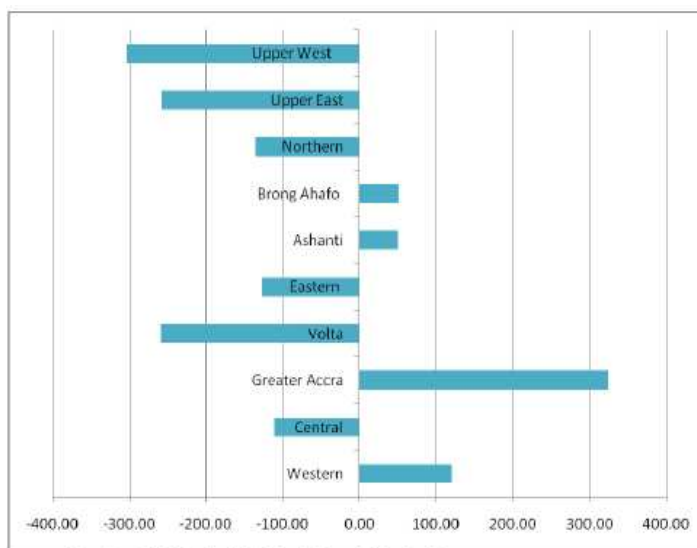
Figure 5. Net migration rate, per 1000, by region

Source: Ghana Statistical Service, 2010 Population and Housing Census.

Internal migration in Ghana continues to be equally significant, revolving around livelihoods and labour migration which may be affected by climate change, trade, education, national service, and trading, or family relations. As demonstrated in the figures below, dominant mobility patterns generally start from the north of the country and the Volta region and proceed to urban centres in the south. More specifically, there is a tendency towards urbanisation, with movement towards the major cities of Accra, Tema and Kumasi, as well as to rural areas in the forest and transitional agro-ecological zones where the potential demand for agricultural labourers is high (Awumbilla et al., 2014).

Figure 6. Old and new regions of Ghana. The sixteen new regions are named, and the ten old regions are illustrated in colour categories

These regional disparities and their related mobility patterns are evident in the 2010 Population and Housing Census. Six regions (Volta, Northern, Eastern, Upper East, Central and Upper West) experienced negative net migration (Population and Housing Census 2010). The regions that recorded positive net migration (Greater Accra, Western, Ashanti and Brong Ahafo) are either industrial hubs, areas with a favourable climate for agricultural production (especially with regard to export crops) or both. This pattern is similar to that in the 2000 Population and Housing Census. Besides the Eastern Region, the regions which recorded negative net migration are among the least developed in the country (GSS 2017).

Factors related to access to land are relevant to many types of contemporary mobility in Ghana. The establishment of the Akosombo dam is a case in point. It was anticipated to promote the development and modernisation of land and access to electricity. While it may have been relatively successful to this end, an additional consequence was the resettlement of 80,000 people, many of whom were thereby rendered landless. There continue to be issues around land access and tenure that force mobility especially on women and young people, who may suffer bias in matters of inheritance and who tend to be more vulnerable in cases where families are split up. Particularly in rural areas, the pressure on land tends to be linked to socio-economic factors such as increasing competition over access to land and climate change, where land degradation and higher population densities have contributed to reducing crop yields and access to land. Such factors are at play in regions across Ghana to different degrees, being present in conjunction with various other factors when households decide to engage in mobility practices. As such, these challenging environmental and livelihood conditions can be said to have partly determined the social structures, conditions of resource access and mobility patterns in the north (Grischow and Weiss, 2011;

Van der Geest, 2011). Similarly, there are particular challenges that people in urban areas face that must now be taken into consideration when households decide whether or not to move. Areas of informal settlement with limited access to services are becoming more visible in peri-urban and urban areas of Ghana, implicating migrants' prospects for a better life. We also see this tendency in north-south mobilities, both historically and today.

Factors influencing mobility: a closer look at north-south migration

Historically, there have been several notable intersections between the environment and mobility practices in Ghana. Mobility in the region, whether for shorter stays or permanent resettlement, has continuously been used, willingly or not, as a way of coping with and adapting to changing life circumstances. In other words, having to deal with the repercussions of environmental change has not made that option either more or less novel. As exemplified by the Akosombo dam resettlement, these repercussions may be related not only to environmental conditions, but also to governance interventions with environmental implications, such as histories of and approaches to environmental and resource management. A prominent example is the north-south disparities that contributed to the consequently unequal development trajectories of northern and southern Ghana (Jarawura and Smith, 2015). These poorer environmental and livelihood conditions have long been important drivers of migration in the rural north. Low crop yields and the scarcity of agricultural land are both reported by migrants as determining their decisions to leave the north. Generally, waves of migration from north to south tend to correlate with cycles of rainfall, vegetation cover, crop yields and, to a certain extent, population densities in rural areas that cause overuse and force some to seek out alternatives to subsistence or small-scale farming (Van der Geest, 2011). However, there are many factors involved in decisions to go or stay, and while environmental factors undoubtedly play a role, it is potentially problematic to single them out.

For instance, the 1970s and early 1980s are particularly noted for intense droughts. Although the droughts were felt nationwide, they were more devastating in the north, where farmers had to struggle with poorer agro-ecological conditions, a general lack of opportunities in the non-farm sector and high levels of poverty (Yaro, 2004). Yet, most international migrants departed from the country's urban areas rather than from the regions under the most stress (Adepoju, 2010). Poor exposure to information and networks and lower educational levels among the largely rural population of the north may offer one explanation for this (Awumbilla, 2008). However, it may not be that simple. Despite the strained livelihoods and food insecurity, outmigration from the northern regions decreased during the drought-ridden 1970s and 1980s. This indicates the complexity of correlating migration flows with environmental change. In this instance, several other indicators must be included when evaluating the factors that influence mobility as a coping strategy, including educational level, wealth and environmental conditions. In the example of the 1970s and 1980s, a consideration of the political environment of the time offers another explanation.

National, political and economic circumstances, as well as the effects of the drought further south, made migration to the south less appealing (Van der Geest, 2011; Jarawura and Smith, 2015). Outmigration from the northern regions then increased again in the 1990s, just as the rainfall improved. This may be explained by the continued developmental divergence of the north and south of the country in the 1990s: economic recovery was evident in the south, but the north experienced little improvement (Van der Geest, 2011; Jarawura and Smith, 2015). This underlines the fact that, while the issues of in situ environmental conditions, livelihoods and resource access may be important for people's decisions to move, other factors are also at play in historical and contemporary mobility patterns. This includes broad political and economic factors, while the prospect of better farming conditions and access to land and labour in the receiving areas has also been found to be important in individual or household decisions to migrate (Van der Geest, 2011).

To explain the increased outmigration rates from the northern regions to the south in the 1990s, it is relevant to draw together diverse aspects such as the droughts of the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the high rate of bush fires between 1978 and 1983, and the political and economic malaise stretching back to the 1960s, which attracted the prescriptions for economic restructuring from the IMF and World Bank. The introduction of the Economic Recovery Programme of 1983 marked a watershed in Ghana, effectively establishing the capitalist system as the dominant economic ideology.[10] Although the changes resulted in certain successes, new patterns of poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity emerged as different social groups were subsumed under the economic adjustment reforms that were effectively non-distributive and non-equitable (ISSER, 1993).

Subsistence farmers participated minimally in the sectors that experienced rapid growth under the programmes. Incentives to increase output in subsistence farming were lacking, and the removal of subsidies, notably on fertilisers and petroleum, dramatically increased production costs and cancelled out the few opportunities provided by the improved rural terms of trade[11] (Yaro, 2004). This situation, together with campaigns against the use of fertilisers because of their impact on the environment, pushed farmers back into growing low-yielding traditional crops. By contrast, commercial farmers producing non-traditional crops such as cocoa and coffee benefited from their activities, as producer prices for these crops were favoured to encourage their production for export.

The concentration of efforts to create enabling conditions for cash crops introduced a spatial dimension of inequality, as only the south of the country possessed the ecological conditions that were suitable for most export crops (Yaro, 2004). The fall in north-south migration has previously been attributed to the

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[10] The infusion of millions of dollars in grants, the re-negotiation of short- and medium-term loans on more flexible terms and the influx of foreign experts in economic liberalisation brought significant economic and political stability to Ghana. Indices of economic performance improved tremendously and were accompanied by a large-scale infrastructure face-lift hitherto unseen in the country. The immediate successes of the economic adjustments made Ghana a show case for neoliberal structural adjustment in the developing world (Boafo-Arthur, 1999).

[11] As reflected in the consumer price index.

widespread drought that reduced the gains in the more fertile ecological zones in the south (Van der Geest, 2011). Yet, there was also the problem of a lack of capital with which to embark on journeys to the south, as northern farmers had little harvest to sell.[12] In the 1990s, when the rains restored agricultural conditions across the country, rural-urban migration increased again, reflecting the logic of the farmer's migration decisions. These factors may explain the circumstances surrounding mobility patterns, where rates of north-south migration slowed down in the 1980s, followed by an upsurge in the 1990s.

However, just as in the rural areas, the urban destinations often failed to provide the required job opportunities because of the poor response to the economic restructuring of the private sector[13] (Norton et al., 1995). Thus, the structural adjustment programmes' reinforcement of the long-standing migration routes from north to south did little to change the fortunes of the northerners (Van der Geest, 2011. On the contrary, the trends in poverty in Ghana have continued to reflect inequalities between north and south, as well as between food-crop farmers and cash-crop farmers. GSS (2017) show that the share of agriculture fell among higher income quantiles, while it rose in the case of poorer quantiles, made up largely of people from the rural north.

In addition, there may also be spatial differences in non-farm income premiums. In the forest and coastal regions, individuals received premiums of 58% and 38% respectively, relative to individuals in the Savannah area. These findings reflect the relative prevalence and intensity of the non-farm sector across the country and its importance in moving people out of poverty. Although this calls for policy attention to the promotion of the non-farm sector in the Savannah, we should not lose sight of the potential for boosting peasant agriculture, making it more profitable, as well as providing economic and environmental solutions.

Although generally the north is the most disadvantaged, some rural areas in the south are facing equally serious situations of poverty, combined with the further threat of degrading environmental conditions. Given the great variety of agro-ecological zones and socio-economic differences between regions, the impacts of climate change are felt across the country, albeit in very different ways. The differences between north and south emphasised in this paper are meant as illustrative examples of the high degree of variation and are not intended to downplay the effects in a number of southern regions. Here, mobility plays a different role, with different restrictions and potentials. The Eastern region is a notable case in point, as it is in relative proximity to urban areas and industrial labour options. Yet, large parts of the population remain engaged in small-scale cash-crop and subsistence farming. The region is also facing challenges related to shortages of land, erosion, climate variability and deforestation.

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[12] These trends, in combination with the larger structural conditions explained above, resulted in the peasantisation of poverty, particularly for the population of the north.

[13] It might also have been the result of poor appraisal and understanding of the Ghanaian context by the World Bank and IMF.

FINAL DISCUSSION

The foregoing discussions have reflected on the mediating power of governance mechanisms in understanding the context of migration amidst environmental challenges in Ghana. Various government interventions from the colonial period to the independence era have contributed to shaping the context in which migration has occurred, particularly from north to south, as well as in the case of international migrants from Ghana to neighbouring countries and elsewhere. In the case of the northern regions, government institutions have not offered adequate practical solutions to mitigate the environmental challenges and support development. Rather, benefits to the rural poor have largely been limited to cosmetic changes that have fallen short of systematically addressing vulnerability to climatic change and the enduring poverty rates. Consequently, longstanding poverty conditions have been reinforced relative to the south, potentially inducing out-migration from the region, whether directly or indirectly. Physical changes, especially cycles of drought and of declining rainfall in the 1980s, enduring erratic rainfall and the opportunities and constraints presented by structural adjustment programmes have defined the livelihood contexts of rural people in particular, and not least the backgrounds to their migration patterns. Meanwhile, environmental conditions have continued to worsen (Songsore, 1992; Yaro, 2016). At the same time, the adaptive measures of the rural poor facing these changes, including land degradation and erosion, also attract attention. Although the literature provides pointers to how the environment interacts with governance in influencing migration flows, there is a need for additional empirical insights to help us understand the intersection between governance, climate change and migration. This would not only illuminate the little that is known about the topic, it would also provide clearer pointers to policy issues relating to climate mobility.

POSTSCRIPT

In March 2020, when it was feared that Covid-19 would continue its spread across the African continent, Ghana largely closed its borders and introduced a month-long lockdown in the largest cities of Accra and Kumasi. The government's reaction and media coverage of the global development of the pandemic spurred a reverse mobility from the urbanisation that, under normal circumstances, draws people to these larger cities. Many sought to leave the urban areas and return to their relatives in the rural areas. Although it is still too early to tell whether this trend will have long-term consequences, it did have an immediate impact on dependence on remittances. Migrants remaining in Accra had little work to do during the lockdown, and those who returned were faced with few alternatives for earning an immediate income (Coffie, 2020).

Other changes included mobility patterns around the borders. Within the ECOWAS zone, citizens can cross borders and access services such as healthcare on equal terms, and indeed in border communities many cross borders on a weekly basis for family or business reasons. With the borders closing, these everyday practices became formally illegal. Despite the general acceptance of continuing cross-border movements in the communities themselves, the media reported multiple cases of people crossing illegally into Ghana, especially across the northern borders and the border from Togo, high numbers of positive cases from these illegal immigrants and their non-cooperation with Covid-19 healthcare centres (BBC, 2020). Although many of these stories are deemed to have been false, they continued to dominate the media, along with fragmentary and inconsistent information on treatment alternatives and the fear-inducing imagery of quarantined patients forcibly separated from their families. In mid-May, as restrictions started to ease, some chieftaincy conflicts started to loom in the northeast, exacerbated by the border infiltrations of people from neighbouring countries and the increased mobility to and from the epicentres in Kumasi and Accra.

Given the institutional pluralism of local governance in Ghana, where chiefs, community leaders and religious leaders influence populations on a par with local government actors, the coronavirus phenomenon has highlighted how such institutional pluralism can make governance efforts biased. For example, a chief was fined 48,000 Cedis for going against lockdown, and a pastor was given an equally high fine as well as a prison sentence for going ahead with a public sermon during the lockdown (APA-Ho 2020). By contrast, no imams were charged despite the fact that several mosques continued to conduct prayers. In addition, for the installation of nine new chiefs, the police offered security and protection for the mass gatherings (Kudekor 2020). When regulations around curfews and lockdowns are authorised differently for different institutions and population groups, it raises questions about who represents local populations and to whom different institutions are accountable, as well about asking how we may understand the power dynamics between chieftaincy institutions, religious leaders and government actors.

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